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Newes from Brest.

A Diurnal of al
that Sir Iohn Norreis
hath doone since his last
arrivall in Britaine

*Also of the taking in of the forte by
Croyzon, and the names of such
Captaines gentlemen and others
that were slaine and hurt
in this service.*

1594



Imprinted at London by Peter Short, for
Thomas Millington, and are to be sold at his shoppe
vnder S. Dunstons Church in Cornhill.

1594

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To my especiall and very good
friende L. T.



Ir if vertue and valure were as sure to be com-
mended and magnified of many, as it is spited
and maligned of most, I needed not too haue
troubled my selfe with the writing vnto you
the true reporte of our General S. Iohn Norries
his late honourable seruice in Britaine, where-
in hee hath especially done acceptable seruice too the
french King and greatly honored hir royall Maiestie and re-
uiued in those partes the reputation of our nation and coun-
try, in performing many and sundrie valient exploytes there:
but cheisly with that lately attempted against the impregnable
forte by *Croyzon*, which the Spainardes made of purpose too
countermound the Castle of Brest, and to make them selues
maisters of that great haven, and to the end you may aparent-
ly see how little time he spent in vaine, and with what difficul-
tie it was atchiued, I send you a Iurnall of all that Sir Iohn Nor-
ris did, sence his last ariuall at *Penpole* in Britaine to this time
which I can assure you to be most true: Being my selfe an eye
witnes & noting daily every daies actiō. Pardon me if you find
me not so eloquent in writing as the discourse requiereth, and
the worthenes of the victory doth meritt. A soldior hath small
retoricke, for whosouer followeth Mars taketh little aquan-
tance of the Muses, yet being loth deserued honnor should be
obscured and cast in darke obliuion I haue bluntly presumed
to write y^e the naked truth, hoping you will take my good-
will in good parte, and yeeld honnor his due desert, though
rudely deciphered. And thus wishing your welfare I end.

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The first of September our toothy
Generall Sir Iohn Norreis, landing
with new forces out of Englande
at Penpole receaved letters pre-
sently from spardeshall D'Aumond
and Sir Thomas Baskerill, who com-
manded in his absence the eng-
lish troopes being then before the
castle of Morlayx, in that season they stode expecting e-
uery day to bee fought with all by the enemy Duke Mer-
curie who was aduanced for the same purpose within
three leagues of them, and did but onely attend the com-
ming of spounser Boisdolphin, with some french horse to
ioyne with them, but this their tempozzinges in the
ende cost them the castle, for immediately the very nexte
day after the generalls landing with greate expedition,
to wit the second of September, he put himselfe vpon the
way to Morlayx, and vpon the fiftie of the same moneth ar-
riued there, being fourteene leagues distant.

His comming was generally ioyed at by all the Britons
but especially by the inhabitants of Morlaix whose good,
or ill estate depended on his comming, for both the castle
a cruell neighbour held against them, and the Duke Mer-
curie was at hande to reskew the defendants who in as-
surance of reliefe from him acquitted themselves manfully.
Namely the gouernour himselfe Monser Rochempoul, the
Count Magnion, and Monser Rostin, with diuers other
gallants: but the generall so amated the enemy that the
Duke Mercurie not onely stayed from marching nearer
vnto vs, but the 10. of the same retired with all his forces
both french and spanish, assuring himselfe that he could
expect of Sir Iohn Norris nothing but blowes, They of the
castle acquainted therewith: within 2. dayes after the
Dukes retreat yealded vpon the castle. So that onely his

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presence without the hazard of any of her Majesties subjects, both enforced the Duke to retire, and the castle to yealde.

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This castle thus rendered, we staid there 10 dayes in respect that the Marshall wanted money for the satisfying of his people, whereof at the last he was furnished by those of the towne of Morlaix. Then Monsieur de Lyscort a wonderfull braue man and the barron of Molac were sent befoze with some herquebuziers, to the ende they might block vp the fort of Croyzon by Brest, and preserue the quarters about, who were further assisted with 400 men out of our ships by Sir Martin Fourbylther who commanded the English shippings. And presently the army dislodged to a place called Luez, thence too a village called La Fou, next to Chastreau l'yn the next day to Lacornan a village the 3 leagues from Quimper-Corantin which was held by the enemy.

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The same night the Marshall with 400 french and Sir Ihon Norris with as many English marched to Quimper-Corantin, and on a suddaine surprised the suburbs & possessed them with small resistance. The towne was willing to yeild but that the garrison would not suffer them. But Sir Ihon Norries whose mind was still to do some exploit against the Spagniards at the fort of Croyzon, leaving this towne invested by the Marshall and those of our English regiments, mounted by his brother Sir Henry Norris our Lieutenant Generall himselfe onely with his owne regiment, and his owne companie of horse, marched towards the fort, and lodged that night at Croyzon. And the next day late downe before the fort. These dayes were spent in unshipping and bringing by the artillery, which were 14 peeces (whereof the Marshall furnished but 2 culueringes) and in making of approaches, which was greatly hindered by the want of Gabions, fascines, and other things necessary for such a purpose.

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2.3.4

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ther provisions for the making of platformes, which wee hoped by promise to have had in a rebines sent us from the gouverner of Brest but our Generall could procure almost nothing from thence but with manie difficulties by reason of the weather,

The 5 of this moneth we had newes that the Marshall and Sir Henric Norrie had Quimperlou into their hands.

The 6 of this moneth the enimies made a sallie out upon our trenches but were verie bravely beaten home againe with the losse of 7 or 8 of their men, but per this their losse was very unfortunatelle answered by the death of Captaine Anthonie wingfield our Sergeant Major generall being shot with a Carren out of the fort, as he stood by the gabions with his rapier drawn the which with the shot was beaten through his bowels. This man with great reputation had long time served her majestie both in the wars of the lowe Countreies, Portugall, and France; and at his last going into Brittain, to dispose of his estate as if he were never to returne; and the same date or the date before his death, tooke such order for his debtes as if he had a prelage of his ende.

The next date the Marshall D'Aumonde and Sir Henric Norrie with our English regiments, came to us from Quimper and were quartered at Croizon and thereabouts. After whose coming 4 daies were spent in mending of the artillerie; planting of our ordnance and making of platformes for them to play. On the 12 the enimies made a sallie upon the french trenches, who having not the leisure to arme them selves fell betwene 30 and 40 men and as manie hurt, and from thence they advanced themselves towards our trenches, where we lost in their defence ten or twelve men but we did put them againe in possession of their trenches.

Having now all things ready for the batterie, I will

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as well as I can describe unto you the forte.

You shall understand that more then 2 partes of the fort was defended by the water, the rest was made so exceeding strong as either by arte or charge could be don.

On the south front therof on each corner were too exceeding strong bastions that on the west side was 17 passes in the fronts, that on the east 10 passes: the countaine betwene both was 37 foote thicke at the toppe; and within these they had made a verie large intrenchment, and the bastions were exceeding well flanked from the rocke by the water side planting both on the flankers and bastion some great ordnance. The lay entrenched within three or fower paces of their counter scarp: the french men on the East side and we on the west side, the batterte lay in the midst betwene the trenches. These things thus providentlie ordered by the Marshall and our Generall; on the 23 our artillerie began to plate, and continued some 700 cannonados but did so little harme by reason of the strength of the place as scarce ante the w of a breach appeared, only we did beat alwaie their parrapete and some of their flankers whereupon some hundred men commanded by Captaine Lyster, were sent to helpe and see if they could holde the counter scarp. Then manie of our brave men and gallants thirsting after honor: desirous to do somewhat farther having possessed themselves of the enemies counter scarp, which onelb they were commaunded to attempte undertooke the breach which they performed so well as that not withstanding the unaccessableness of the place, and the great resistance the ennemie made. Yet the most parte of them attained to the verie top thereof which they helde for a while but were afterwarde repulsed. This enterpryse was with wonderfull great resolution and valure seconded by sir Thomas Basqueruille, who likewise got so farre as the point of the breach.

There

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There were lost in this attempt many
braue men namely,

Slaine in the assault.

Captaine Barker.

Captaine Prudder.

Captaine Jackson, Sericant Maior of Offend. who had no
charge there.

Haynes. Ensigne to sir Henrie Noreys.

Corporall Essex,

M. Throgmorton, and some 16 or 18 soldiers.

Hurte in the assault.

Captaine Audley.

Captaine Bartley.

Captaine Couth.

Captaine Goodwins Lieutenant.

Captaine Williams Lieutenant.

Captaine Buckes. Lieutenant,

And other priuate men.

Burned with poulders

Sir Thomas Knowles.

Captaine Ashendon.

Captaine Bishop.

Lieutenant Larkley.

Captaine Lopeley.

Master Waineman, and diuers others.

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You are to understand that this attempt was onely made by the Englishmen on the bastion of the west side, for the Frenchmen never attempted any thing against their Bastion, alleging that it was not Assaultable.

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The Marshall and our Generall seeing the little effect that our artillery wrought, devised to make a mine on one of the bulwarkes, namelie on the east bastion towards the French trenches in perfecting the rest some 17 or 18 daies were spent.

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But on the 30 being an exceeding wet morning whereby our powder and match were not fitte for service the ennemie againe founde thereby opportunitie to fall out vpon the French trenches, and killed betwene 20 and 30 of them at the least, among whom was Monsieur Lycot a verie braue gentleman one of the Marshalls of the Campe, who was abandoned by the French and the trenches wholie possessed by the ennemie, but our Englishmen did presentlie repossesse them of their trenches and killed some of the Spaniards. Our nation too an exceeding great frende of this Monsieur Lycot her exceedingly loued our Generall as if he had been his owne father, and generally fauoured all english men and gaue vs the reputation to be verie braue soldiers.

By the 7 of Nouember our mine was reasonable well perfected and a determination held againe to begin the batterie with a resolution that so soon as the mine should be blowne by which was made towards the bulwarke by the French trenches, that the Frenchmen should assault that parte and the english men their Bastion, and that others with scaling ladders should make attempts in euerie corner so that the defendants should be on euerie parte assailed. But the Marshall seeing that date like sence in the morning for our Generall and shewed him

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him his letters from the Gouverneur of Rennes and from
diuers others by which hee was aduertised that Don
Ioan de l'Auquilar generall of the Spaniards was mar-
ching towards Croyzon with all his Spanish forces to re-
lieve the fort and was already aduanced to La Coen
a village within five leagues of us, and therefore aduised
our generall to besiege to Croyzon thinking it not fit to
hazard any men having so strong an enemy at hand
ready to ioyne battel with them. But sir I. Norreis having
his courage nothing daunted with the approach of the en-
emy, his harte seruing him both to winne the forte by
assault and to encounter his enemy in the field, shew-
ing that a dishonour and disreputation it were to haban-
don the siege, and also that little cause the enemy
should haue to aduance himselfe farther if the forte were
gotten, his comming being onely to reskue it. He so
much importuned the Marechall that he gaue him wolte
the ordering of that daies service. Immediatlie our Gen-
erall gaue order to the Cannoniers for the batterie and
caused the artillerie to plate. Every man was assigned
his charge, some to the assault, other with scaling ladders to at-
tempt, to enter, and by 12 of the clocke he caused fire to
be set to the mine, which albeit it did not so much as was
looked for, yet it made the accesse so easie vnto the French
as that a man might haue ridden vpon horsebacke, and
our men namely: Captaine Latham, Captaine Smith, and
Captaine Iohn Norreis, with diuers other gallant gentle-
men gaue vpon the other bulwarke, and continued the
assault without loosing onepace of the highth untill halfe
an houre past foure, and in the end firste entered the same,
and seised vpon three ensignes that were there, and put e-
very man they found in the fort sauing one alferre to the
sword, some of the Spaniards lept from the rocke to the

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water, but our Marriners with their small boates mette with them and slew them: some three or foure others being taken escaped with their liues, no man was found, slayne Au sang Froyd.

Sir Thomas Baskerull served this day with greate valour and industrie to the admiration of all men. Our sea men and Marriners this day acquitted themselves wonderfull brauely: and were exceeding forwarde in all attempts, as maye well appeare by that valiant Knight Sir Martin Fourbisher, who in the assault receauing a hurt, is thereof now dead.

The chiefest of the French men, namely such gentlemen as seruing a horsebacke, did put themselves that daye a foote, did exceeding gallantly, namely Mounser Roumege, Vn Maistre du Camp, a man of great courage, and who most intirely loued our generall was slain, upon the rampear, and his ensigne by him, who if they had bin well seconded vndoubtedly they had caried it first, and had got the reputation of the first entrie. As for the rest I hold them nothing worthy of comendations in this action.

Slane in the assault.

Captaine Edge once Captaine of our generalls gard.

Lieutenant Flud.

Captaine Smiths Lieutenant.

Ensigne to Captaine Brett.

VIII. Gent. of our generals owne company.

Manie other gentlemen and betwene 20. or 30. priuate men

Hurt in the assault.

Sir Thomas Baskerulle.

Sir Martin Fourbisher who is now dead.

Captaine Iohn Norreis

Captaine Brett.

Captaine Smith.

The

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The victory being thus gotten by the greates vertue and admirable industry of our generall, the forte being appointed to be raised, we dislodged the next day to Croyzon, to ioyne with the rest of our troups, to attend there that the enemy durst doe, who within two dayes after, founde reason to retire themselves five leagues further from vs.

Thus haue I finished I assure you truly, although not largely: all that was most remarcable in this dayes service.

It may bee I giue not namely to every man the honour he deserved; but therein I excuse my selfe with my shortnesse in writing, and also my selfe being herchi an actor, my eye was not at leisure to note every mans desert. There was founde in the fort 29. barrells of powder, some mace, and very few small shotte: and of meate, biscuit, wine and these reasonable good store. I must a litle commend the desertants for an enemy, deserteth his just praise, especially the chiefe commander. Hee neither in all these attempts shewed himselfe daunted, hee made sundry sallies, but moste vpon the French, to his greates advantage and reputation. He lost before this last dayes service 60. men, some at his sallies, some with our cannon, and some at our first attempte vpon the breach, also this very laste day our cannon playing incessantly vpon the mayne courtaine, betweene the two bastions slew fiftie of his men. This laste assaulte continued almoste five howers without intermission, they neuer quailed untill hee was slaine, which was a small time before the entrie, and then the greater parte being slaine the reste overtired and hurte, weare forced by our gallantes to retire, and so there were slaine of Spagiards in this forte

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almost 400. I note another signe of his greate resolution, for if hee founde any willing onely to speake of preading, he woulde cause him to bee bound to some stake or post, and exposed him to the breach, leaving his armes at libertie to fight for his defence. I hope no man will mistake if I commend the valour of the enemy which was conquered, for the greater is the honour of them that were the conquerors. This their vaine resolution might well haue serued their turnes, if they had not dealete with our generall who was as resolute as they, and therein overmicht them. For the next day, Don Ioan de l'Aquilar sending a trumpet for the redeeming of prisoners, our generall sente him answere that their ransomes were payed, and that hee was now as ready and at leasure to fighte with him. This victory achieved, he sente the three Spanish ensignes into Englande, and presented them to her Maiesty, who as a most sacred and gracious prince, most highly esteemed, and lovingly accepted them. God of his infinit mercy send her dayly so to triumph over her enemies, and that it will please him to protect our generall for her greater services.

FINIS.

